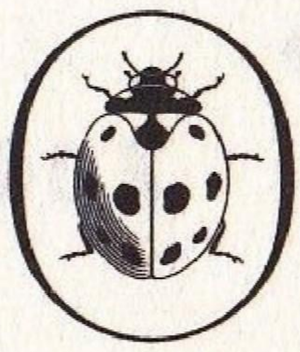
'WELL-LOVED TALES'

The Princess and the Pea

Here is another well-loved tale in the Ladybird 'Easy-Reading' series.

Young children will enjoy having this story read to them, and seeing the delightful illustrations. Children who need extra reading practice will be encouraged by the clear type and relatively simple text. The books in this series of tales are graded according to reading difficulty, and this book is in Grade 1 — the easiest to read.



Series 606D

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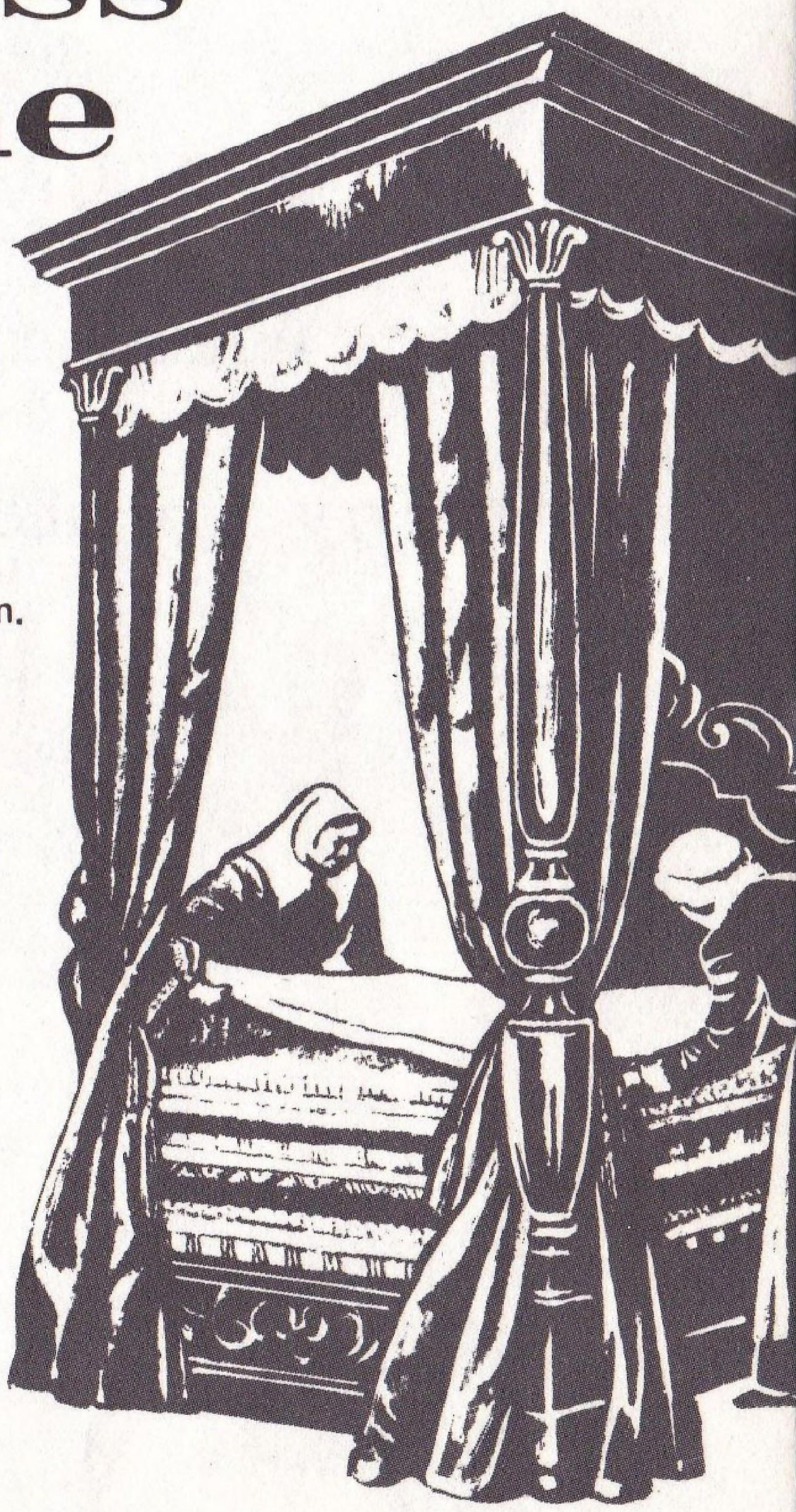
'WELL-LOVED TALES'

The Princess and the Pea

A LADYBIRD 'EASY-READING' BOOK

retold by
VERA SOUTHGATE, M.A., B.Com.
with illustrations by
ERIC WINTER



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THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA

Once upon a time, there was a prince. When he grew up he wanted to marry a princess. But he wanted her to be a *real* princess.

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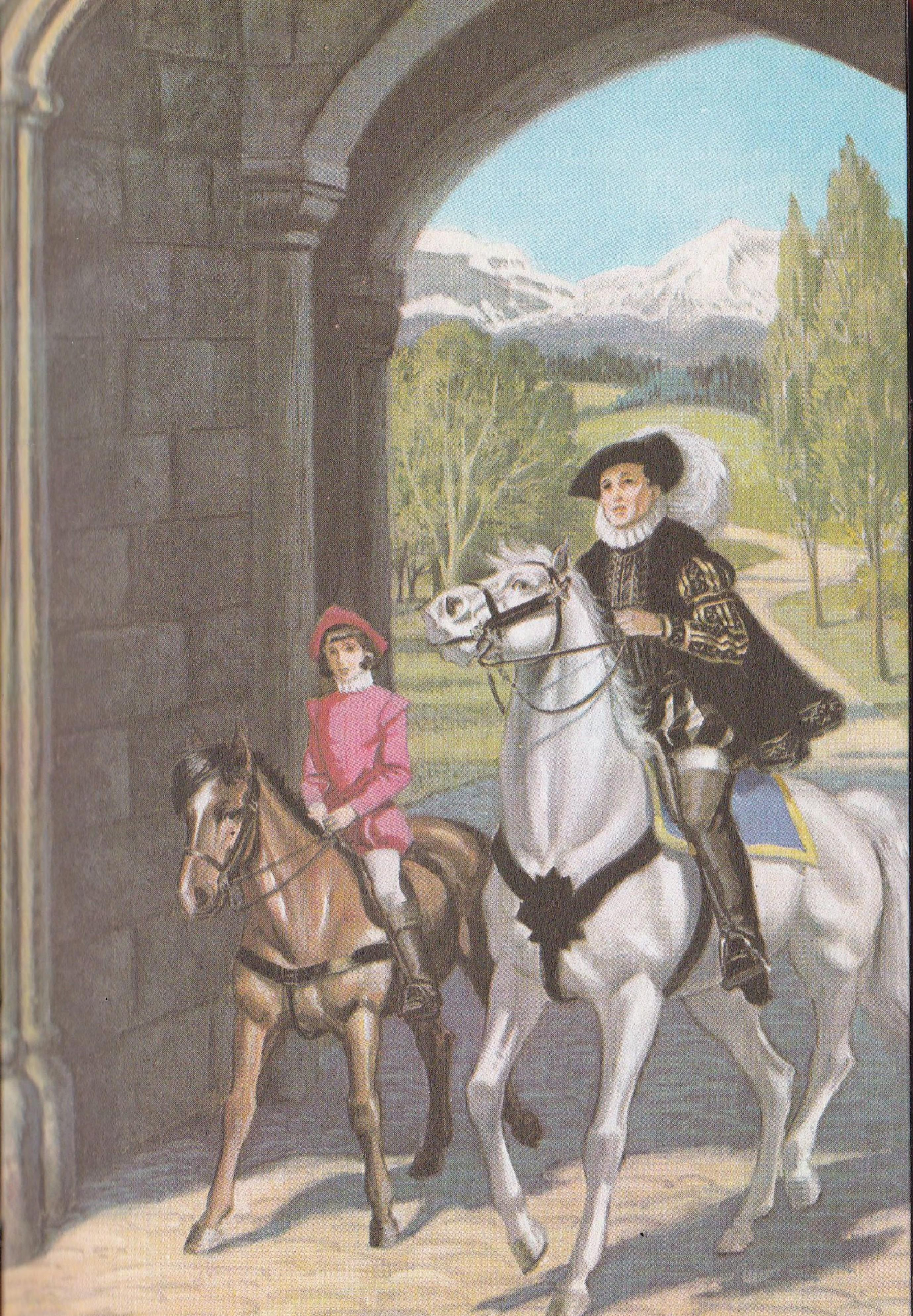
The prince went all over the world looking for a *real* princess whom he could marry.

The prince met many princesses but there was always something the matter with them. One was too tall and another was too small. One was too sad and another was too gay.

Somehow or other, not one of the princesses was just right. The prince was never quite sure if they were *real* princesses.

At last, the prince came home again. He was very sad because he did want to marry a *real* princess.



Then one night there was a terrible storm. The lightning flashed, the thunder roared, the wind blew and the rain poured down.

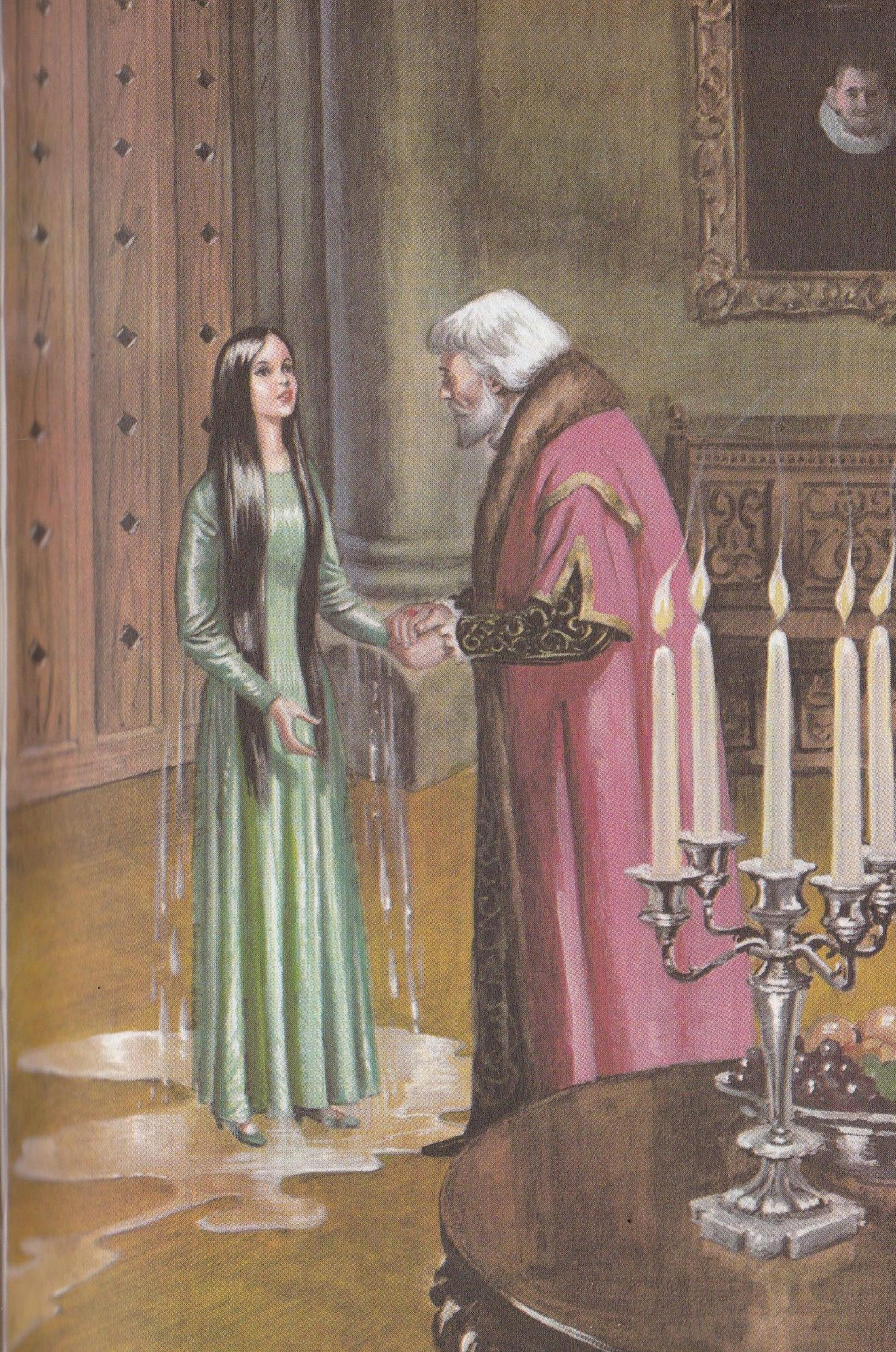
In the middle of the storm there was a knock on the door of the castle. The old king went to open the door.

There, standing outside in the pouring rain, was a lovely lady. She might have been a princess, but she was so wet that it was difficult to tell.

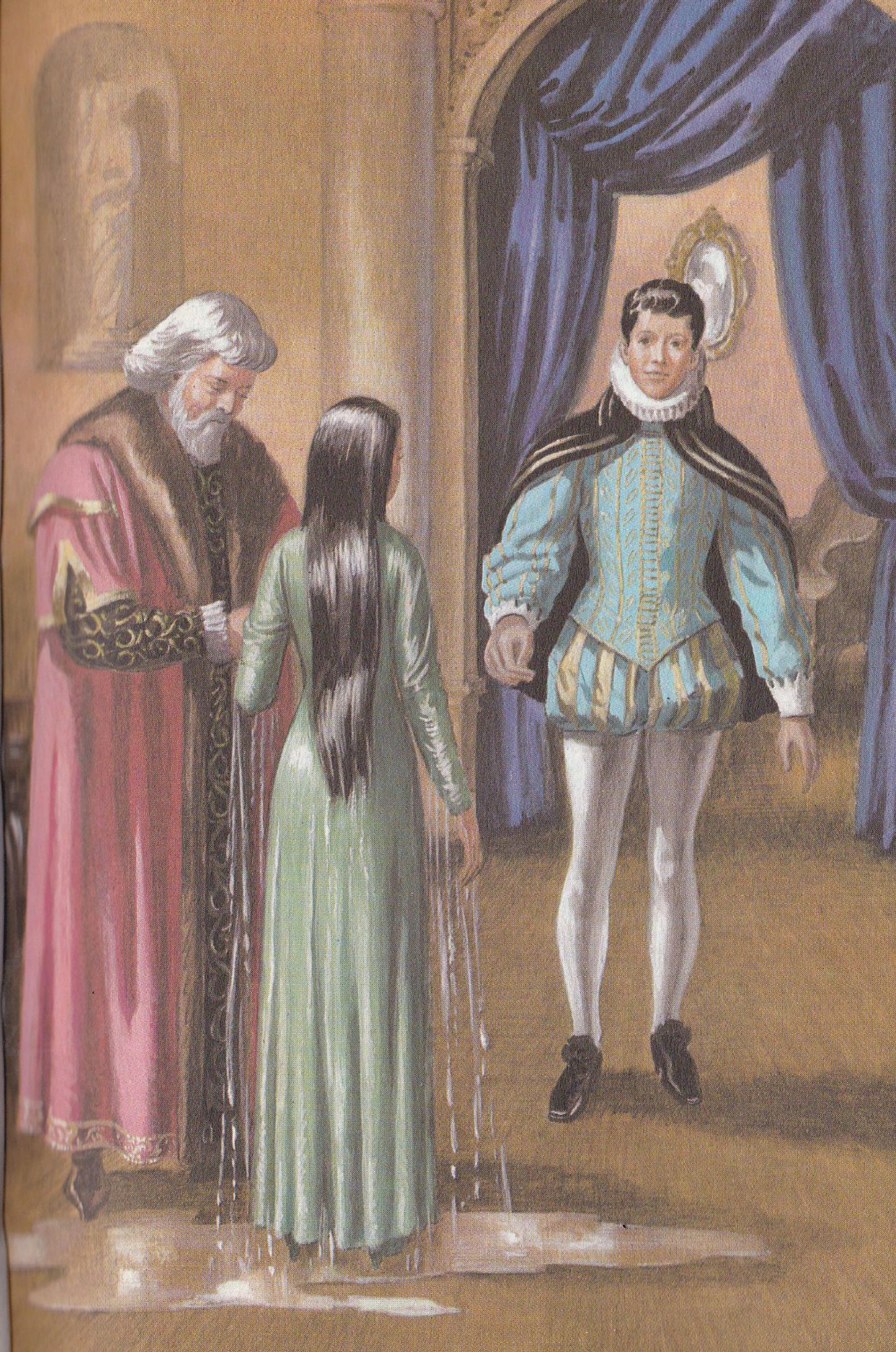
Her hair was so wet that the water from it was running down her face. Her clothes were so wet that the water was pouring out of them. Her shoes were so wet that the water was running in at the toes and out at the heels.

The king led the princess into the castle, out of the wind and the rain.

There she stood, in a pool of water, and all she could say was, "I am a *real* princess."



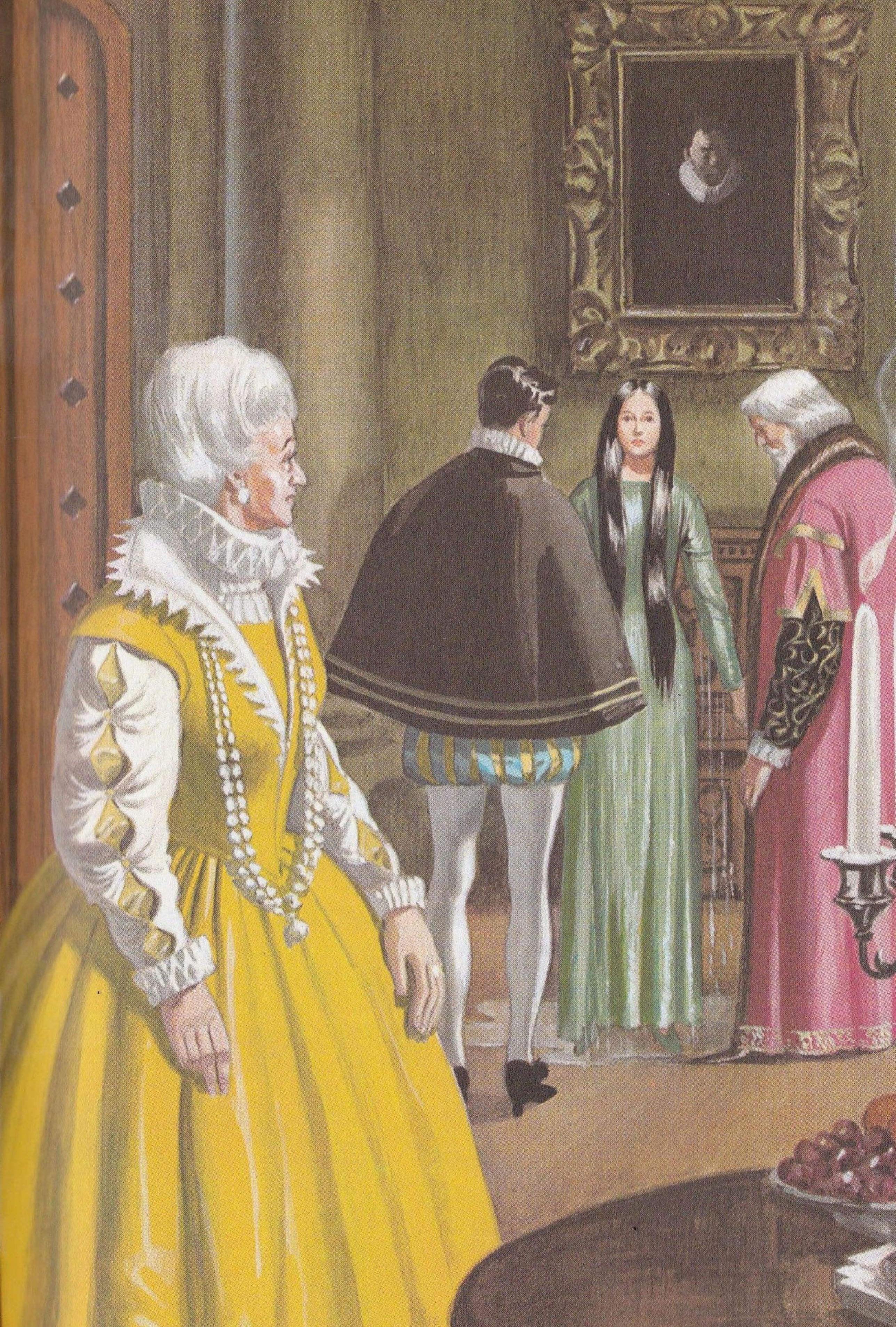
The prince could not believe his ears when he heard her say, "I am a *real* princess."



The old queen heard her say,

"I am a *real* princess."

"We'll see about that," thought the old queen, but she did not say anything.



While the princess was being bathed and dried and dressed in dry clothes, the queen went to see about a bedroom for her.

The queen had all the bedclothes taken off the bed. Then she put a pea under the mattress.

Then more mattresses were put on top, until there were twenty mattresses on top of the pea.

Then the queen had twenty feather beds piled on top of the twenty mattresses.

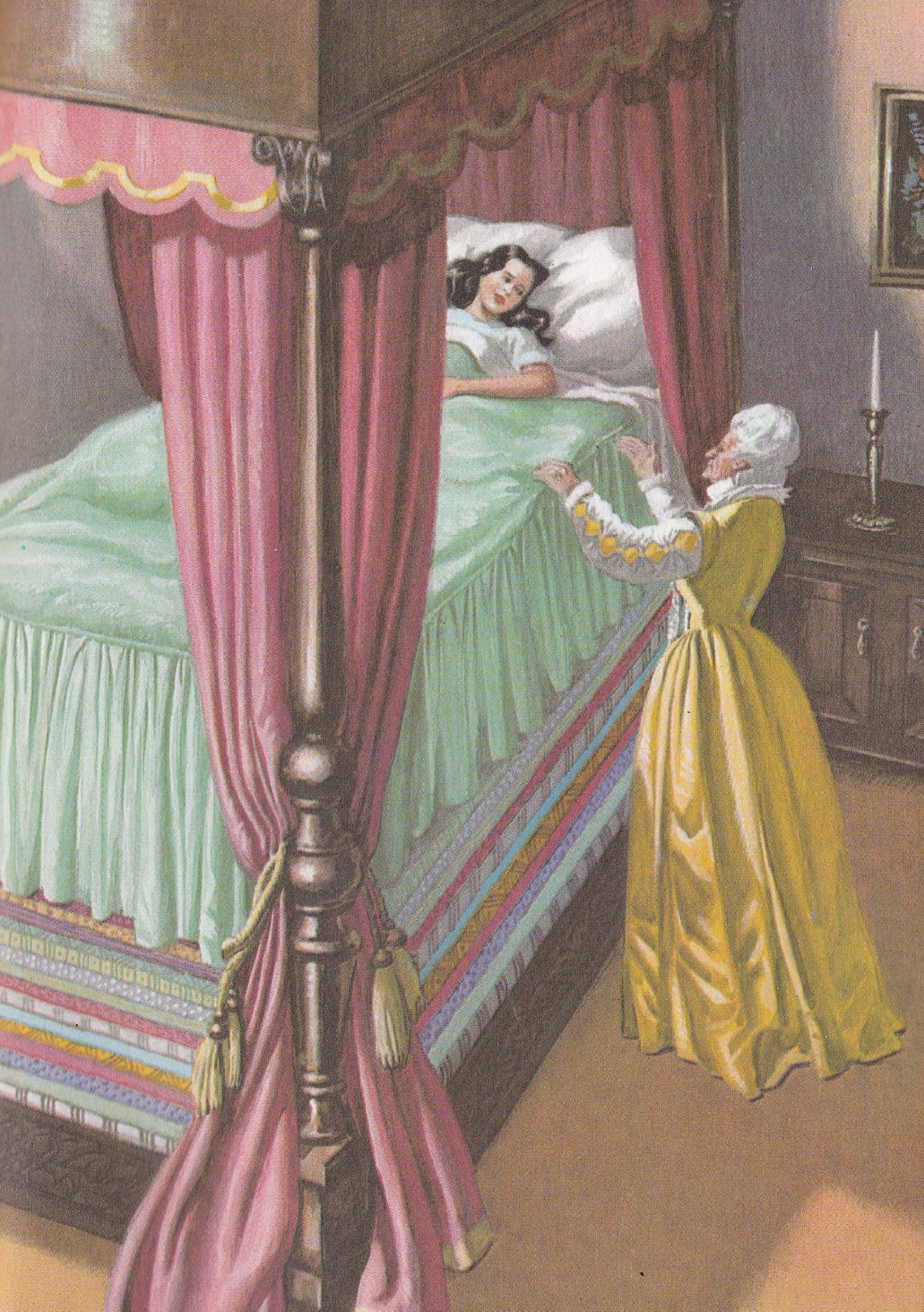
"Now we shall find out if you are a real princess," said the queen to herself.

When the princess was warmed and fed; the queen led her to the bedroom and tucked her into bed.

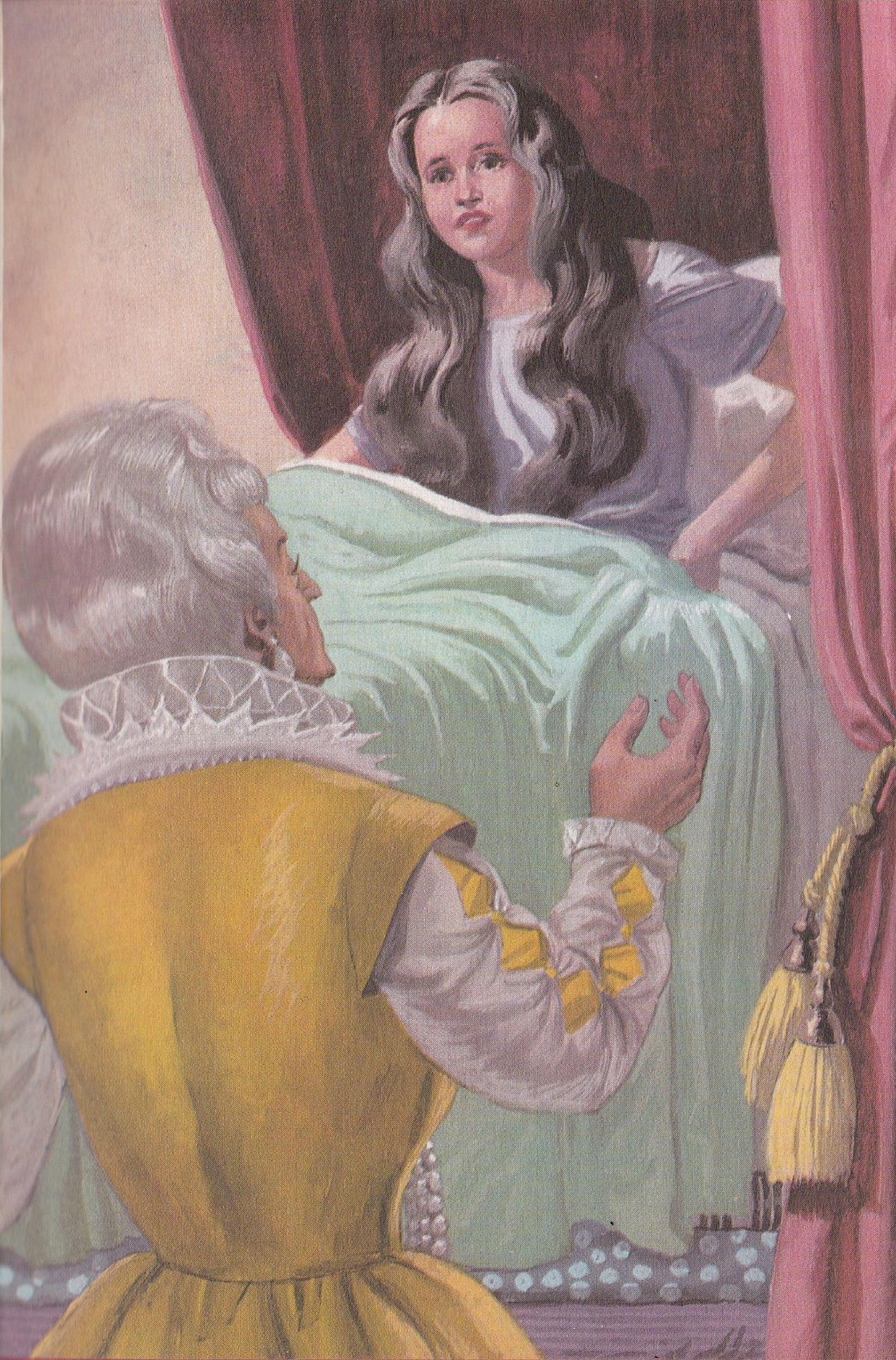
In the morning, the old queen went to see the princess. "How did you sleep, my dear?" she asked her.

"Dreadfully," replied the princess, "I hardly slept a wink all night!"

"What was the matter?" asked the old queen.



"I do not know what was in the bed," replied the princess, "but there was something hard in it. Now I am black and blue all over."



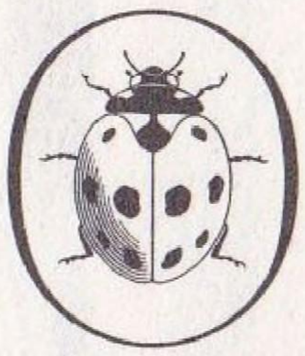
Then the queen knew that this was a *real* princess because she had felt the pea through twenty mattresses and twenty feather beds. Only a *real* princess could be as tender as that.

The prince was filled with joy when the old queen told him that they had indeed found a *real* princess.

Now the queen had the pea taken out of the bed so that the poor princess could sleep well.

A wedding was arranged between the prince and the *real* princess. Then there was great joy in the castle.

As for the pea, it was placed in a museum. It may still be seen there—if no-one has taken it away!



Series 606D

List of titles in the Ladybird Series 606D (Well-loved tales)
Graded in order of reading difficulty.

1 *Cinderella* (Grade 3)
2 *The Elves and the Shoemaker* (Grade 1)
3 *Sleeping Beauty* (Grade 2)
4 *Jack and the Beanstalk* (Grade 3)
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6 *Dick Whittington and his Cat* (Grade 2)
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9 *The Princess and the Pea* (Grade 1)
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